



# GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON SUICIDE PREVENTION

MARYLAND

**Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention Meeting  
March 18, 2020 • 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

## **Commission Members on Phone**

Shameka Burke	LGBTQ Community
Amanda Celentano	Department of Aging
Janel Cabbage (Chair)	Behavioral Health Administration
Johanna Dolan	Substance Use Recovery Community
Christina Drushel-Williams	Governor's Office for Children
Monica Guerrero Vazquez	Hispanic/Latino Community
Russell Himmelberger	Active/Former Member of the Armed Forces
Kevin Johnson	Faith Community
Amy Kulp	Suicide Prevention Group
Jennilyn Landbeck	Family Member
Georgette Lavetsky	Deputy Secretary Public Health
Lynne Muller	Maryland State Department of Education
William Powell	National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide
Dustin Richardson	American Indian Community
Kirsten Robb-McGrath	Department of Disabilities
Susan Schwarten	Survivor of a Suicide Attempt
Haley Taylor	Maryland Addictions Directors Council
Jennifer Treger	Mental Health Association of Maryland
Holly Wilcox (Vice Chair)	Academic Community

## **Workgroup Lead**

Lanny Berman                      Suicide Fatality Review Workgroup

## **Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Staff**

Kristin Abrams	Behavioral Health Administration
Natalie Miller	Behavioral Health Administration
Indu Radhakrishnan	Behavioral Health Administration

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Commission Chair Cabbage welcomed all attendees to the Commission meeting. Commissioners introduced themselves.

## **Approval of January 15, 2020 Minutes**

No corrections were made to the minutes. Minutes were approved.

## **Extreme Risk Protection Orders**

Jen Pauliukonis of the Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence presented to the Commission on Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) in Maryland. Maryland's ERPO law is based on model



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policy developed by the Consortium for Risk-Based Firearm Policy, who determined certain risk-based behaviors that contribute to gun violence. Under Maryland's law, specified medical professionals, law enforcement officers, family members, and current dating partners may file an ERPO petition if someone is at risk of suicide or harming others. If the ERPO petition is granted, that individual will be unable to purchase a firearm and currently owned firearms will temporarily be removed for the length of the order which depends on the type of ERPO granted. To date, Marylanders have filed 1,331 petitions, 720 of which became orders. These petitions were largely made by law enforcement and family members, with little implementation by healthcare providers.

### **COVID-19 Updates**

In the Weekly Suicide Prevention Scoop, BHA will include resources for managing suicide risk via telehealth, crisis resources, and recommendations for managing mental health in the midst of this pandemic. All in-person trainings have been postponed. BHA is in the process of identifying new dates for the rescheduled trainings and will offer priority registration to those who were already registered for one of the postponed sessions.

### **Legislative Updates**

The Maryland General Assembly has introduced several bills related to suicide during the 2020 Legislative Session. HB 643 and SB 701, *The End of Life Option Act*, were introduced on January 29 and February 3, respectively. SB 810, *Electronic Signs Along Highways*, has passed in the Second Reading and received a Favorable Report by the Finance Committee. HB 997, *Task Force to Study Veterans' Suicide*, has been withdrawn after an unfavorable report by Health and Government Operations. Senator Eckardt has also introduced SB 789, *Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee*. The 2020 Legislative Session has been postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Commission Branding**

Commissioners voted on three logos for the Commission. The logo will be included on products developed by the Commission.

### **State Suicide Prevention Plan**

The State Plan Review Team will review the full draft of the State Plan. They intend to adjust the objectives outlined in the plan to include more specific information. Commissioners who have additional information to include under each objective should send this information to Commission Chair Cabbage and Commissioner Drushel-Williams.

### **Suicide Fatality Review Workgroup Update**

Dr. Lanny Berman provided updates for the Suicide Fatality Review Workgroup. Senator Eckardt introduced SB 789 on February 3. A Second Hearing was held on March 3. Amendments to address confidentiality will be integrated into a redraft. Due to the postponement of the legislative session, the bill will be stalled until the session resumes. If



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passed, SB 789 will establish the Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee that will review suicide deaths to determine risk factors, lapses in systemic responses, barriers to safety, and strategies for prevention. The Committee will consist of nine or more members that can serve three-year terms on the committee, with an option for reappointment. Committee members will not be compensated for their time. The Committee would be authorized to interview people with direct knowledge about the decedent, review case records, collaborate with the Child and Overdose Fatality Review Teams, and share aggregated data and findings with public health authorities. Committee meetings would be closed and confidential.

### **Data Workgroup Update**

Commissioner Lavetsky provided updates for the Data Workgroup. The Data Workgroup has identified two new projects: improving the reporting of race/ethnicity for Native American suicides and improving the capacity to map data. In addition, the Workgroup is preparing to reissue an updated data packet on circumstances of suicide deaths in Maryland. Two of the Workgroup's existing projects – updating the Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) Portal and gathering intentional self-harm morbidity data – are on hold and will resume per contractor capacity to update the EPHT Portal and validation of ICD-10 codes for reporting intentional self-harm morbidity data.

### **Training Workgroup Update**

Commissioner Treger provided updates for the Training Workgroup. The Training Workgroup has focused on obtaining feedback from primary care practices about current suicide prevention training and implementation practices, barriers, and needs. The Workgroup has connected with Tammy Liu of the Maryland Primary Care Program, who has agreed to administer a survey to practices within the program to gather more information around these topics. The survey will be provided to all staff within the practices, not just physicians. The Workgroup also plans to conduct regional key informant interviews of County Health Officers and other primary care physician leaders. While the Workgroup plans to develop questions to include on the survey and in the key informant interviews, the Workgroup will be shifting its immediate focus onto behavioral health providers due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

### **Means Safety Workgroup Update**

Due to time constraints, the Means Safety Workgroup did not provide an update at this time.

### **Open Discussion**

Moving forward, a portion of each Commission meeting will be set aside for breakout Workgroup meetings to elicit participation from the larger Commission. A spreadsheet will be sent to Commissioners to sign up for breakout groups. Breakout group membership will be capped to allow for equal participation among the groups.

Commissioners should provide Commission Chair Cabbage with any suggestions on ways to improve the online process for the next Commission meeting.



**The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 pm.**

**The next Commission meeting will be held remotely on May 20, 2020 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm.**